



AXBRIDGE RURAL  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**Annual Reports**

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

AND

Sanitary Inspector for 1937





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## 1937

TOTAL BIRTHS—309.				150 Males.		159 Females.		
				Total.		Males.		Females.
Legitimate	...	...	...	297	...	140	...	157
Illegitimate	...	...	...	12	...	10	...	2
				<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
				309	...	150	...	159
				<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>

Rate per 1,000—14·00.

## DEATHS (ALL CAUSES)—302.

Males, 145. Females, 157. Rate per 1,000—13·68.

Number of women dying in or from child-birth—

From Sepsis ... .. 0

Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and parturition 1

Death-rate of infantile deaths under 1 year per 1,000 births—42·07

Total—13 infantile deaths.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) ... 0

Whooping Cough ... .. 1

Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ... 1

The prevalence of Cancer is marked, 47 (males 17, females 30).

Deaths from Tuberculosis, 10 (males 6, females 4).

## DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR, 1937.

Under 1 week	...	...	...	6
1—4 weeks	...	...	...	5
1—6 months	...	...	...	1
6—12 months	...	...	...	1
				<hr/>
Total			...	13
				<hr/>

Illegitimate—1 male.

Stillbirths, 13 (males 9, females 4).

Legitimate (males 9, females 4).

# AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH for 1937.

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*To the Chairman and Members of the Axbridge Rural District Council.*

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MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—

The geographical features of the district are chiefly limestone, sandstone in a few localities, peat in the lower marshes, and clay. The water in the lowlands near the sea being brackish, where shallow wells are dug as in the North Marsh.

The area is 89,767 acres.

Estimated total Population for 1937, 25,000.

Census, 1931, 21,905.

Population in private families, 22,060.

Estimated number of private families, 5,952.

Rooms per person, 1.1.

Rateable value, £135,352.

Sum represented by a penny rate, £563 19s. 4d.

### WATER SUPPLY.

The South Marsh supply, owned by the Rural District Council, arises from springs in a well at Cross, through the limestone strata. The springs are fenced in. The springs at Dunnett, Compton Bishop, augment the well of the South Marsh scheme. South Marsh.

Cheddar,  
Axbridge and  
Highbridge.

The Cheddar, Axbridge, Wedmore and Highbridge Water supply, owned by the Rural District Council, arises from the springs on Charterhouse in an isolated spot and believed free from any source of contamination.

The water flows by gravitation to a reservoir in the cliff of 80,000 gallons capacity, and thence by pipes to a reservoir at Brent Knoll of 180,000 gallons capacity, for the supply of the Urban District of Highbridge.

Winscombe.

The Winscombe and Shipham Water supply, owned by the Rural District Council of Axbridge, arises from springs at Rowberrow Bottom, from the sandstone formation.

The Charterhouse Springs and the Bristol Water Works now supplement this supply, and during 1937 considerable augmentation was necessary.

The composition of the water is good, and is not hard.

Blagdon.

Name, owners  
and nature.

The Blagdon Water supply, owned by the Rural District Council of Axbridge, arises from springs at Blagdon, known as the Ellick Springs, from the old red sandstone. They are now well protected and not liable to any contamination, all access by cattle being prevented.

North Marsh.

The North Marsh Scheme, owned by the Rural District Council of Axbridge, supplies the following parishes :—Banwell, Churchill, Congresbury, Puxton, Locking, Wick St. Lawrence, Wrington and Butcombe. The water for this area is obtained from three sources—viz., the Rowberrow Reservoir of the Bristol Waterworks Company, the Blackdown Reservoir of the Winscombe and Shipham supply, and the Charterhouse springs.

Burrington.

The Burrington Water supply was taken over from the Burrington Parochial Water Committee on the 1st April, 1937.

Cheddar and  
Axbridge.

The Bristol Waterworks Company have made a lake approximately  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles in circumference in the low land between Axbridge and Cheddar to serve as a reservoir.

Loxton, population 161, is now supplied from public mains laid by the Axbridge Council. Loxton.

With few exceptions, the water supplies have no plumbo or solvent action, and cases of lead poisoning are not now known. More care is taken with the taps, storage and manufacture of cider, brass, pewter and galvanised vessels being abandoned.

Examinations of water are usually bacteriological. Water  
Analyses.

Sewers exist in Wrington, Cheddar, Axbridge, Banwell and Blagdon. There are still privies and cesspits in use in other parishes. These are gradually being replaced by w.c's, which are made to discharge to cesspools at least 50 feet from dwellings. No privy or cesspit or manure heap should empty or overflow direct into a ditch, and in view of the actions at law recently taken owing to cattle being poisoned by polluted ditches, the matter is of grave importance. Sewers and  
Drainage.

Much drainage and sewerage work has been carried out in the District, and the sanitation of many parishes compares favourably with that of many towns. Drainage.

Privies are rapidly being replaced with water carriage systems and with earth closets. In places with a water supply, water-flushed w.c's are in general use.

The Winscombe sewer is making rapid progress.

Orders investing the District Council with Urban Powers for removal of household refuse have been adopted in respect of the parishes of Cheddar, Axbridge, Hutton, Berrow, Congresbury, Kewstoke, Wedmore and Winscombe. Otherwise, house refuse is removed by the individual householder, and the cesspits emptied periodically in like manner. It is desirable that village dumps containing sundry old tins and other refuse be periodically removed. Urban  
Scavenging.

Dairy work is the chief industry of the district. The procedures are usually carried out with increasing care. The churns are either scalded out with boiling water or steamed, and the milk is usually excellent in quality. The milk that is sent away to towns is all strained and Milk Supply.



cooled by special water-cooled apparatus. Milk cans must not be left in the fields and washed in ditch water, as has been known to occur.

The farms and cowsheds are constantly and thoroughly inspected, and much help given, and great improvements have been effected. The Sanitary Inspector and his assistants have been most tactful and successful.

The cows and cowsheds are kept fairly clean, though hardly up to the Continental or model standard, and "the cow is a dirty animal." Grooming the cows and sheds means labour—the grave present-day difficulty in most callings of agriculture—still the question of cleanliness cannot too strongly be impressed on those who attend to cowsheds and dairies, and upon milkers especially. The health of the animals in the locality is usually good; being a very mild area they are out most of the winter months, and tuberculosis is apparently not so common as in some districts.

In case of infectious disease in a dairy farm the milk is all sent off from the field of milking, and is not allowed to enter the premises; dairy work is temporarily stopped and the milk sold forthwith. By these stringent measures disease is very materially stopped from spreading, and our thanks are due to the farmers who always acquiesce in this procedure without hesitation, notwithstanding the loss and the inconvenience it causes.

Fourteen Grade "A" (T.T.) are licensed by the Somerset County Council.

Fifty-two Grade "A" Accredited Milk licences have been issued by the Somerset County Council.

Thirty-eight herd samples of milk for testing for the presence of tubercle bacilli, 94 Grade "A" (T.T.), 163 Grade "A" Accredited and 1 Pasteurised Milk samples were taken during the year and 60 unsatisfactory results were recorded.

The Register of Dairies is complete.



The pig industry is increasing and is satisfactorily <sup>Pigs.</sup> carried out in a cleanly and efficient manner. The few complaints which arose were speedily dealt with.

Advice is constantly given and suggestions made, and the conditions are improving as regards method, buildings and sanitation, though there is much room for improvement and progress. Manure is not removed frequently enough.

The sanitary inspections have been numerous, many <sup>Sanitary Inspections.</sup> household defects were remedied—*e.g.*, sinks, w.c's, rubbish heaps, ventilation defects, dirty rooms, bedding, furniture and bad floors. No cellar dwellings exist in the district.

Very little diseased and bad food has been seized <sup>Food.</sup> during 1937, 470lbs. and a quantity of offals in all having been surrendered or seized.

The sanitary condition of some of the schools is not <sup>Schools.</sup> good, and this matter is receiving special attention. The water supply and conveniences for washing are in most cases adequate. All cases of absence from infectious disease are reported by the schoolmaster or mistress to the Medical Officer of Health and the County Medical Officer, and the cases excluded from school.

Many cases of adenoid disease, bad teeth, defective eyesight and hearing have been attended to.

It is very essential that the existing houses be made <sup>Housing Act.</sup> waterproof and habitable. Houses are so scarce that few can be allowed to be abandoned, and some absolutely essential repairs should be carried out temporarily, in view of being demolished or reconstructed later ; others in better condition should be put in good repair, as every house so restored means saving the erection of new houses costing £350 each.

Care will naturally be taken that such be for the working class only, and not for town people who like to have a little cottage in the country for week-end visits.

It is also questionable if houses in the marshes and turf moors are fit for habitation. They are dry and

comfortable in the summer, but are periodically flooded in the winter and in times of heavy rainfall.

Factory and  
Workshops  
Act.

All industries are on a small scale, employing a few hands only.

No register is provided, but the bakehouses (19), butchers and sausage makers ; dressmakers ; basket and boot makers ; tailors ; saddlers ; washing people ; carpenters and coach builders ; smiths and brewers are constantly inspected on our daily rounds of inspection and visits.

All workshops in the district have been periodically inspected ; also the home workers. No cases of infectious disease have originated therefrom.

Baths.

There is 1 Public Swimming Pool at Cheddar ; a small one is used at the Summer Camp, Barton. Both are well cared for.

Nursing and  
Midwives.

The 11 district Nurses and Midwives do excellent work.

**Professional Nursing in the Home.**—(a) The County allow a subsidy. The proceeds of entertainments, maternity fees, and subscriptions from patients are the chief sources of revenue. The latter, in some districts, are not easy to collect, though the nurses are invaluable and deeply appreciated and worked very hard.

(b) There are no nurses provided for Infectious Diseases—*e.g.*, measles, etc. If necessary, as in an epidemic, they must be engaged from a centre and lodged near the cases.

District Nurses are also Certified Midwives. There are eleven in the Axbridge District.

**Clinics and Treatment Centres.**—Those at Weston-super-Mare are utilised for this district for venereal and tubercular diseases.

There are no Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, Day Nurseries, School Clinics, etc., in this district.

**Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority or the County Council.**—There are the Isolation Hospital at Cross, the Axbridge Public Assistance Infirmary of 60 beds, and the St. Michael's Home for Phthisis near Axbridge.

There is no Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the district, except the two excellent maternity wards at the Axbridge Infirmary and the Children's Home, Cheddar.

The work is done by the Medical Officer of Health, the Sanitary Inspectors and the Lady Health Visitors, who have had much experience of tuberculosis and general sanitary work, all acting under the control of the County Medical Officer of Health. Sanitary Administration.

All throat swabs of suspicious diphtheritic aspect, sputa from possible and probable tuberculosis cases and blood specimens, water analysis, chemical and bacteriological, are sent to the experts at the Public Health Laboratory, Taunton, whose decisions have been most accurate and of the utmost value and assistance.

Has been prevalent ; 24 cases were reported ; these were mostly of a sporadic type—imported cases. No deaths occurred. In all cases any milk business was confined to sending off milk from the field of milking and no dairy work was conducted on the premises. The houses were visited, precautions were enjoined, and pamphlets of advice given, and the schools notified. Scarlatina.

On the termination of the disease the rooms were thoroughly disinfected, all linen washed and boiled, while the bedding, blankets and pillows were placed in the super-heated steam disinfecter, being moved now **immediately** by the Council's own van.

Has been prevalent.

Measles.

One case of para-typhoid.

Para-typhoid.

There were two fatal cases of typhoid admitted into the Fever Hospital. They were of a very grave type. One died of cerebral meningitis due to toxæmia, and Typhoid.

the other of perforation of the bowel. The cause was undoubtedly due to bathing in polluted streams or rhynes.

Venereal  
Diseases.

None notified ; these can be treated locally with the aid of the County Laboratory.

Diphtheria.

There have been 3 cases notified during the year, mostly of a severe type ; none died. Cultures of all suspected throats have been taken and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, to whom our best thanks are due for the rapidity and accuracy of their investigation, without which in obscure and mild cases a correct diagnosis could scarcely be arrived at.

Antitoxin has been distributed free of charge, *ad lib*, to all the Poor Law Medical Officers, which bounty has been much appreciated, and it has been used freely and promptly with much success.

At the termination of cases, disinfection is carried out, as in cases of scarlatina.

Ophthalmia  
Neonatorum.

No cases notified.

Schools.

Measles, etc.

Mark, Kewstoke, Bleadon, Wedmore, Bagley, Blackford, Butcombe, Wick St. Lawrence, Compton Bishop, Loxton, Christon, Congresbury were closed for influenza and colds. East Brent was closed for measles.

Preventive measures are adopted in scarlatina and diphtheria, regarding the discharges from the mouth and nose as a possible means of spreading the malady.

These are disinfected or burnt, particular care being enjoined as to the nasal and oral secretions, mouth toys, pencils, etc., and orders given to boil cups, spoons and feeding utensils after use, and rag or paper handkerchiefs carefully burnt. Kissing spreads disease to a dangerous extent. The same applies to sleeping sickness, spinal fever, measles, pneumonia and tuberculosis.

Puerperal  
Fever.

No cases.

Puerperal  
Pyrexia.

Five cases ; 1 death. The case was sent to Bristol Royal Infirmary.

Fifteen successful cases **under 1 year** and **2 over** Vaccination.  
**1 year.**

Eleven cases were notified and 10 deaths. The Tuberculosis.  
 excellent way in which all cases of tuberculosis are  
 inspected, followed up and advised, and the suitable  
 cases sent to Homes and Sanatoria, must reduce the  
 disease in time. No actions have been taken *re* Public  
 Health Regulations (Tuberculosis), 1925, or compulsory  
 measures necessary.

All the rooms were sprayed with Izal and fumigated  
 after evacuation. The cases are constantly inspected  
 and advised. Milk should always be boiled or sterilised.

There is a Hospital of 40 beds at Cross Hill, Axbridge. Isolation  
 Hospital.  
 It has again done good service in outbreaks of diphtheria  
 and scarlatina. A special report is appended.

There is an ambulance for the Hospital. Ambulance.

All articles for disinfection are sent to the steam Disinfection.  
 disinfectors at the Isolation Hospital for all infectious  
 cases—scarlatina, diphtheria and tuberculosis. In  
 tuberculosis, the rooms occupied are sprayed with Izal,  
 the rooms papered or coloured, whenever possible, and  
 ceilings whitewashed.

Notifications of tuberculosis are reported to the Health  
 Department in Taunton and the place visited by the  
 Health Visitors, Inspector or myself. Leaflets of advice  
 are distributed and disinfectants and sputum bottles  
 provided, or other articles requisite for personal sanitation.  
 The removal van, for removal of infected bedding,  
 is invaluable.

The Public Health Acts Amendment Act and the Acts.  
 Infectious Disease Prevention Act, 1890, have been Byelaws.  
 adopted in this district. Byelaws and Regulations have  
 been made for slaughter-houses, nuisances and buildings.

See Tables, page 2.

Births.

See Tables for deaths under one year.

Deaths.

## MILK SUPPLY.

(a) Number of Retailers on the Register ... ..	113
(b) Number of Cowkeepers and Wholesalers on the Register ... ..	781
(c) An inspection (farm to farm) of the whole district has been made.	
(d) General advice and cleanliness emphasised everywhere.	
(e) Tuberculin Tested Milk Licences ... ..	14
(f) Accredited Milk Licences ... ..	52

## NOTIFIED INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 1937.

				Admitted to			
				Total.	Hospital.	Deaths.	
Scarlatina	...	...	...	24	...	11	0
Diphtheria	...	...	...	3	...	2	0
Enteric and Para-typhoid	...	...	...	3	...	3	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	5	...	1	1
Pneumonia	...	...	...	29	...	2	12
Measles	...	...	...	80	...	3	0
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
Erysipelas	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
Malaria	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
Polio Encephalitis	...	...	...	0	...	0	0
Anthrax	...	...	...	0	...	0	0

Some cases were admitted to Hospital from outside this district.



## TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases, 1937						Deaths, 1937.					
Age period.	Res- piratory.		Non-Res- piratory.		Total.	Age period.	Res- piratory.		Non-Res- piratory.		Total.
0	0	0	0	1—	1	0	0	0	0	0—	0
1	0	0	0	0—	0	1	0	0	0	0—	0
5	1	0	0	0—	1	5	0	0	0	0—	0
15	1	1	0	0—	2	15	1	1	0	0—	2
25	1	2	1	0—	4	25	1	1	0	0—	2
35	1	0	0	0—	1	35	1	0	0	0—	1
45	1	0	0	0—	1	45	2	2	0	0—	4
55	1	0	0	0—	1	55	1	0	0	0—	1
65 up	0	0	0	0—	0	65 up	0	0	0	0—	0
	—	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—
	6	3	1	1	11		6	4	0	0—	10
	—	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—

CAUSES OF DEATH IN AXBRIDGE RURAL  
DISTRICT, 1937.

	Males.		Females.	
All causes	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...
Small-pox	...	...	...	...
Measles	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...
Influenza	...	...	...	...
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	...
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	...
Other tuberculous diseases	...	...	...	...
Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	...	...
Diabetes	...	...	...	...
Cerebral hæmorrhage, etc.	...	...	...	...
Heart disease	...	...	...	...
Aneurysm	...	...	...	...
Other circulatory diseases	...	...	...	...
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	...
Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...
Peptic ulcer	...	...	...	...



Causes of Death—*continued*.

				Males.	Females.
Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 years)	...	...	1	...	0
Appendicitis and typhilitis	...	...	0	...	0
Cirrhosis of liver	...	...	0	...	0
Other digestive diseases	...	...	0	...	0
Acute and chronic nephritis	...	...	8	...	3
Puerperal sepsis	...	...	0	...	0
Other puerperal causes	...	...	0	...	1
Congenital debility and malformation,					
premature birth	...	...	6	...	5
Senility	...	...	9	...	19
Suicide	...	...	2	...	0
Other deaths from violence	...	...	5	...	5
Other defined diseases	...	...	13	...	9
Anthrax	...	...	0	...	0
Causes ill-defined	...	...	1	...	1
Polio Encephalitis	...	...	1	...	0
Other liver diseases	...	...	0	...	0

**Notification is carefully carried out.**

Numerous inspections have been made in the district and all insanitary conditions and nuisances abated as soon as they were discovered or reported, while those localities in which diseases appeared received special attention and its sanitation investigated and improved.

I am, your obedient servant,

A. V. LECHE,

Medical Officer of Health.

## Factories, Workshops, Workplaces and Homework.

### 1—INSPECTION.

Including Inspections made by the Sanitary Inspectors.

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections	Written Notices	Prosecutions
Factories ... .. (including Factory Laundries)	96	Nil	Nil
Workshops ... .. (including Workshop Laundries)	50	Nil	Nil
Workplaces ... ..	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total ... ..	146	Nil	Nil

### 2—DEFECTS FOUND IN ABOVE.

No nuisances under the Public Health Acts were dealt with in connection with the above.

A. V. LECHE, Axbridge,

April, 1938.

Medical Officer of Health.

# Phthisis Sanatorium and Hospital Accommodation.

## AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT.

	ST. MICHAEL HOME.
Classes for which accommodation is provided—	
(a) Early cases ... ..	—
(b) Intermediate cases ... ..	25
(c) Advanced cases ... ..	16
By whom provided ... ..	Endowed by the late Mrs. W. Gibbs. Cheddar.
Where situated ... ..	41
Total number of beds ... ..	By application.
How are patients selected? ... ..	
Are the patients under the care of a resident Medical Officer ... ..	No.
What charge, if any, is made for the use of Beds? ... ..	None.
Do the Sanitary Authority use : (1) their Isolation Hospital, or (2) their Small-pox Hospital for cases of Phthisis? ... ..	No.
Do the Sanitary Authority reserve Beds in any Phthisis Sanatorium? If so, how many, and in what Sanatorium? ...	No.
Do the Sanitary Authority provide port- able Open-air Shelters or Tents? ...	Yes.

There is a Tuberculosis Dispensary at Weston-super-Mare and Cheddar.

A. V. LECHE,

April, 1938.

Medical Officer of Health.

## INFECTIOUS HOSPITAL, CROSS.

Forty-four cases of scarlet fever were admitted ; 1 had a scalp wound on admission, which healed. A boy of 11 years had a large wound 7 inches long in his shin bone from which a large piece of bone had been removed for ostro-myelitis ; he was with us from June to December, but made a perfect recovery.

Eight cases were admitted for diphtheria, of which 4 were doubtful ; 1 child had to have his tonsils excised, after which operation he rapidly recovered ; all the others did well.

Four cases of measles were sent in, also 3 grave pneumonia cases, of which 1 died.

Ten erysipelas cases, 1 being very serious, but recovered.

Two grave cases of typhoid were admitted, both of which died, 1 boy aged 10 years of meningitis, his brother, aged 8, of perforation of the bowel. There is no doubt that these lads incurred the disease by bathing in polluted streams and rhynes during the "heat spell." Every investigation was made and precautions taken, but no other cases occurred.

One case of para-typhoid recovered.

One case of puerperal pyrexia was admitted ; she developed an inflammatory swelling of the arm and was subsequently sent to the Bristol Royal Infirmary.

A severe case of sleeping sickness (encephalitis lethargica) made a good recovery.

A very grave case of polio-encephalitis (cerebro-spinal fever) in a child of 3 years, died after a few days' illness.

Two doubtful cases, with skin rashes, proved to be of septic origin.

One case of whooping-cough was admitted.

Four deaths in all occurred.

# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## SANITARY SURVEYOR AND INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR 1937.

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*To the Chairman and Members of the Axbridge Rural  
District Council.*

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MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my 22nd Annual Report dealing with the work carried out by your Public Health Department during the year 1937.

The progressive policy of the Council and the requirements of the Housing Acts and other legislation renders the duties more exacting and onerous in each succeeding year for the various Committees and for the Council's officers.

The results achieved, however, fully justify the required efforts.

Housing.

Schedules are attached which indicate the work in connection with Housing in the District.

Considerable progress has been made with the Housing Survey. An outstanding difficulty is that a large number of the properties belong to owner-occupiers of very limited means. The sympathy due to these people presents itself in such forms as to unreasonably delay progress in effecting better housing conditions for them. There is also a strong public and other influential opinion which is quite contented to express sympathy and create delay which will not

concern or ally itself with practical efforts to improve the housing conditions of these owner-occupiers.

The very worst which can happen to an owner-occupier who may be dehouseed by reason of living in an unfit dwelling is that he will be provided with a good sound cottage of new or practically new construction at a rent determined in accordance with his ability to pay, having regard to the Council's general policy of providing alternative accommodation and to the Differential Rent Scheme. Much of the obstruction is, I am confident, due to suggestions made by parties who are interested in worn-out cottages by reason of mortgages, etc., which they hold.

During the year the whole of the Council's housing sites were inspected with regard to sheds and poultry houses, and 161 new sheds are contracted for. Council Houses.

The paths to four sites were renewed and 68 repairs were made. Approximately 800 general maintenance repairs and 41 internal decorations were carried out ; 104 houses were inspected internally ; 86 houses were painted externally.

The disposal works are now attended to by the Council's own caretaker.

Water services were laid to the Bleadon and Compton Bishop sites.

Contracts for the erection of 38 houses under the 1936 Housing Act were entered into.

The Survey carried out to ascertain the extent of overcrowding in working-class dwellings and subsequent inspections show that overcrowding was not prevalent in the Axbridge District to anything like the extent in most other districts. Steps have been taken to provide for dealing with such cases as exist and no insurmountable difficulties have been encountered in this connection. Overcrowding.

The details of overcrowded dwellings, etc., are given in a schedule embodied in this report.

Tents, Vans  
and Sheds.

The caravans, huts and tents remain a problem, but the powers given by the 1936 Act to deal with those which have been in existence two years or more will tend towards the elimination of these undesirable dwellings. It is unlikely that many more of the horse-drawn type of caravan will be constructed. It is hoped that the Town Planning Scheme when approved will prove effective in controlling camping generally, and will control or prevent the erection of hutments or the further establishment of railway carriages or 'bus bodies as dwellings.

The Council has made a practice of encouraging tourists and holiday camping, and there is no reason why any departure should be made from this policy. Permanent camping is objectionable, as it forms nucleus for shacks and jerry building and detracts from the amenity of its surroundings.

Letters and  
Notices.

There was a continuance of the policy of dealing with matters whenever reasonably possible by interview rather than by letter or Statutory Notice.

Formal procedures are frequently mistrusted and resented by the public, and their elimination usually results in a more comprehensive solution of any difficulty.

The number of informal letters sent by the Department (excluding circulars) was 5,079.

The Public  
Health (Water)  
Act, 1878, and  
The Public  
Health Act,  
1936.

Ninety-three certificates were issued under the Public Health (Water) Act, 1878, and the Public Health Act, 1936, that there was provided within a reasonable distance of houses erected or re-built, such an available supply of wholesome water as to be sufficient for the consumption and general use for domestic purposes of the inmates of the house. Water supplies from the Council's main were provided to 412 premises in continuance of the Council's offer to lay services to boundaries of highways free of cost.



SCHEME.					CONNECTIONS.
North Marsh	...	...	...	...	104
Wedmore	...	...	...	...	21
South Marsh	...	...	...	...	38
Blagdon	...	...	...	...	5
Winscombe	...	...	...	...	15
Cheddar and Axbridge	...	...	...	...	39
Berrow and Brean	...	...	...	...	8
Brent Knoll	...	...	...	...	5

### PART III. CO-ORDINATION SCHEME.

Bleadon	...	...	...	...	74
Compton Bishop	...	...	...	...	20
Loxton	...	...	...	...	15
Hutton	...	...	...	...	68

Part III. of the Council's Co-ordination Scheme to afford supplies to the parishes of Compton Bishop, Loxton (with Christon), Bleadon and Hutton was completed and a reservoir of 100,000 gallons capacity was constructed at Bleadon.

Co-ordination of  
Waterworks.

Three samples of water from private supplies were submitted to the Laboratory of the Health Department of the Somerset County Council for bacteriological examination.

Water  
Samples.

Periodical bacteriological samples of the public supplies have also been submitted. Analytical samples were submitted to Messrs. Waterfall & O'Brien.

Disinfection was carried out to 33 rooms, etc., after cases of infectious disease.

Disinfections.

The methods of disinfection were by means of Izal spray, formalin solution and formaldehyde fumigators. All infected articles or articles exposed to infection which could not be satisfactorily dealt with in the homes, such as clothing, bedding, rugs, cushions, etc., were either removed for steam disinfection or were destroyed, as circumstances rendered expedient.

All steam disinfection was carried out at the disinfection station at the Isolation Hospital, in the Parish of

Compton Bishop, and no infected article was outside the direct charge of a member of my staff or a member of the staff at the Isolation Hospital.

Drainage,  
Sewerage and  
Sewage  
Disposal.

The acknowledged excellent standard of construction of new drainage in the district was, I am pleased to report, maintained. Only by the closest personal interest of members of my staff and the valued co-operation of the various builders in the district was this rendered possible.

With the extension of water schemes, difficulty has been experienced in the older towns and villages as regards drainage disposal, owing to the absence of sewerage schemes and the impracticability of providing satisfactory cesspools on the very restricted plots forming the sites of the dwelling-houses. The operation of the Housing Acts has to some extent assisted the solution of this problem, as many of the dwellings have been found to be such as could only properly be dealt with by Demolition Orders.

In the Parishes of Cheddar, Banwell, Blagdon and Wrington there are very comprehensive sewerage schemes, all excepting the latter being of recent construction.

A scheme (£21,000) of sewerage and sewage disposal for the Parish of Winscombe was commenced.

Two new sludge beds have been constructed at the Cheddar sewage works and the existing sludge pump line extended to same.

The sewerage scheme for Axbridge remains deferred pending decisions as to a new byepass road.

The Wrington sewage disposal works have become obsolete, and considerable reconstruction works are necessary. A preliminary survey has been carried out for the preparation of a scheme for the reconstruction of these works.

The disposal works are now attended to by the Council's own caretaker.

The Axbridge Council has, as the following schedule shows, been very progressive in the matter of providing public water supplies. This progressive action has resulted in larger usage of water and in greater use of water courses, ditches, etc., for the disposal of filthy waters. In general, there are more nuisances from the disposal of filthy waters arising in the district than from other sources. Undoubtedly, the provision of public water supplies is hastening the need of comprehensive schemes in the Parishes of Churchill, Congresbury, Kewstoke, Shipham, Wedmore, Bleadon and Hutton, whilst any general development in any of the other parishes will give a like result.

It is difficult to discriminate as to the effect of the development in any one parish, because over practically the whole of the Axbridge District building is proceeding and there is every likelihood of its continuing and increasing.

#### EXTENT TO WHICH DISTRICT WAS PROVIDED WITH PUBLIC SERVICES AT END OF YEAR 1937.

CONTRIBUTORY PLACE.					PIPED WATER SEWERS. SUPPLY. YARDS.	
Axbridge	...	...	...	...	1,686	3,700
Badgworth	...	...	...	...	Nil.	11,500
Banwell	...	...	...	...	4,272	28,607
Berrow	...	...	...	...	Nil.	3,558
Blagdon	...	...	...	...	8,406	14,600
Bleadon	...	...	...	...	Nil.	7,075
Brean	...	...	...	...	Nil.	5,280
Brent Knoll	...	...	...	...	Nil.	12,616
Burnham Without	...	...	...	...	Nil.	5,400
Burrington	...	...	...	...	Nil.	2,816
Butcombe	...	...	...	...	733	8,831
Chapel Allerton	...	...	...	...	Nil.	6,360
Cheddar	...	...	...	...	11,261	30,138
Loxton	...	...	...	...	Nil.	3,697

Churchill	...	...	...	Nil.	19,605
Compton Bishop	...	...	...	Nil.	10,366
Congresbury	...	...	...	400	15,423
East Brent	...	...	...	Nil.	16,900
Hutton	...	...	...	Nil.	4,457
Kewstoke	...	...	...	Nil.	*Private
Locking	...	...	...	Nil.	3,124
Lympsham	...	...	...	Nil.	10,906
Mark	...	...	...	Nil.	21,300
Puxton	...	...	...	Nil.	4,060
Shipham	...	...	...	Nil.	3,754
Weare	...	...	...	Nil.	9,500
Wedmore	...	...	...	733	43,172
Wick St. Lawrence	...	...	...	Nil.	5,863
Winscombe	...	...	...	1,533	26,289
Wrington	...	...	...	3,338	13,162

\* Piped water undertaking not owned by the Axbridge Rural District Council.

#### Bakehouses.

The 19 bakehouses in the district were found to be well kept.

#### Slaughter-houses and Meat Inspection.

The number of private slaughter-houses on the register was 20. Of these, 7 were registered and 13 licensed. The manner in which they were kept was generally satisfactory, but the number of slaughter-houses is excessive for the area. Certain of them are used but very little, and a better control of slaughtering might be exercised if the occupiers of these made arrangements for their slaughtering to be done co-operatively, following their own premises being closed.

As regards declarations of the presence of disease in animals, it is still noticeable that these are received from certain butchers only, although it is unlikely from their class of trade that they purchase lower grade animals. The inference is that the men who fail to give notice make use of the privilege of having a private slaughter-house to conceal evidence of disease.

This is a serious matter, and a strong argument in favour of the reduction of the number of slaughter-houses in order that better control may be exercised.

During the year 470lbs. of meat and a large quantity of offals of all descriptions were seized or surrendered as being diseased, unsound or unfit for the food of man.

All animals are stunned by a mechanically operated instrument, the electrical stunner or by bolt pistol. Forty-eight slaughtermen have been licensed under the Act.

In no case was it considered desirable to prosecute for meat or other food offences.

Milk production is the principal industry of the district. There were 751 cowkeepers and wholesalers and 113 retailers registered. Milk and Dairies.

Mixed milk samples from 38 herds have been submitted to the County Laboratory for test for tubercle bacilli. There was only one positive result.

Ninety-four samples were also submitted of Grade "A" (T.T.) and 163 samples of Grade "A" accredited milk; 60 unsatisfactory results were recorded, and steps were immediately taken for remedying same.

A booklet for the guidance of cowkeepers has been prepared and issued to all cowkeepers in the district.

The booklet sets out the principal requirements of the Dairies Acts and Orders and other Byelaws and Regulations affecting the milk industry, with a number of suggestions, plans and illustrations for meeting statutory requirements.

New cowhouses have been erected, new drainage and alteration to milk stores have been carried out at 31 farms.

There are 76 factories (including factory laundries) and 46 workshops (including workshop laundries) within the district and registered under the Act. Four milk depots, an iron foundry and two fat refining works are included in this total. A systematic inspection ensures that these premises are kept in a proper sanitary condition. Factories and Workshops.

The sanitation of the schools in the district remained very much as in previous years. Improvements are Schools.

gradually being effected, and it is anticipated that during the next few years a satisfactory standard will be achieved, mainly owing to the extended public water services.

I respectfully thank the Chairman and Members of the Council for the advice and support so readily extended to me at all times. Also I beg to express my gratitude to the Medical Officer of Health, the Clerk and other Officers of the Council for their never-failing co-operation and assistance.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

April, 1938.

HENRY R. DAY.

#### SUMMARY OF SANITARY WORK DONE DURING THE YEAR.

Houses and premises inspected (apart from re-inspections)	1,087
Total inspections (including re-inspections) ... ..	1,848
Complaints investigated ... ..	544
Written notices and letters sent ... ..	5,079
Nuisances from the keeping of animals abated ... ..	35
Nuisances from accumulation of manure abated ... ..	13
Complaints from overcrowding dealt with ... ..	3
Sewers and drains—re-laid or repaired ... ..	108

Numerous verbal notices were given with respect to nuisances, but no record of the number has been kept.

Drainage of new premises inspected and tested ... ..	107
Premises provided with public water supply ... ..	412
Rooms, classrooms and domestic offices disinfected ... ..	33
Milk samples ... ..	295

#### PERIODICALLY INSPECTED.

Registered dairies, cowsheds and milkshops (including wholesale dairies) ... ..	789
Private slaughter-houses (7 registered, 13 licensed) ... ..	20
Bakehouses ... ..	19

HENRY R. DAY,

April, 1938.

Sanitary Inspector.



## HOUSING STATISTICS.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(i) With State assistance.					
(a)	By the Local Authority	...	...		14
(b)	By other bodies or persons	...	...		Nil
(ii)	Otherwise	...	...	...	93

1. Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year :—

(1)	(a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	...	1,087
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	...				1,848
(2)	(a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	...	...	820
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	...				1,206
(3)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	119
(4)		Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	700

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices :—

	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority of their officers	...	...	...	...	26
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3. Action under statutory powers during the year :—

(a).—Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...				Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—					
	(a)	By owners	...	...	...	Nil
	(b)	By local authority in default of owners				Nil



## (b).—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ..	Nil
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
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(a) By owners ... ..	Nil
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(b) By local authority in default of owners	Nil
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## (c).—Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... ..	104
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... ..	25
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## (d).—Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ..	Nil
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(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... ..	Nil
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## 4. Housing Act, 1936.—Overcrowding :—

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ... ..	28
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(ii) Number of families dwelling therein ... ..	28
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(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ... ..	148
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(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... ..	1
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(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ... ..	32
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(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases ...	156
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(d) Particulars of any cases in which the dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ... ..	Nil
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(e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report ...	Nil
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## ORDERS ADOPTED.

PARISH OF AXBRIDGE.—For Urban Powers for Household Refuse Dumping Site. (Order dated 8th August, 1928.)

PARISH OF AXBRIDGE.—(Naming of Streets) Made in respect of Powers under the Public Health Act, 1925—Sections 17-19. (Order dated 18th February, 1936.)

PARISH OF BANWELL.—For Urban Powers to provide for a Dumping Site for disposal of Household Refuse.

PARISH OF BERROW.—For Urban Powers for collection and disposal of Household Refuse. (Order dated 22nd May, 1930.)

PARISH OF BLAGDON.—For Urban Powers to provide for a Dumping Site for disposal of Household Refuse. (20th July, 1936.)

PARISH OF CHEDDAR.—For Urban Powers to provide for a Dumping Site for the disposal of Household Refuse.

PARISH OF CHEDDAR.—Collection of Household Refuse. (31st July, 1936.)

PARISH OF CHEDDAR.—Made in respect of conferring Powers under Town Police Clauses Act, 1847, Sec. 21. (Order dated 5th October, 1929.)

PARISH OF CONGRESBURY.—For Urban Powers for collection and disposal of Household Refuse. (Order dated 9th March, 1932.)

PARISH OF HUTTON.—For Urban Powers for collection and disposal of Household Refuse. (2nd July, 1936.)

PARISH OF KEWSTOKE.—Urban Powers both for collection and disposal of Household Refuse. (Order dated 20th February, 1933.)

PARISH OF WEDMORE.—(Street Lighting Area.) For Urban Powers for collection and disposal of Household Refuse. (Order dated 17th February, 1932.)

PARISH OF WINSCOMBE.—Urban Powers to provide Dumping Site for disposal of Household Refuse. (Order dated 25th January, 1927.)









